Annex "A," Subparagraph 1b, Sociological Background

HISTORICAL SETTING

This section, sketchy as it is, has definite limitations in scope. 000 It is intended to concentrate on the highlights of history which have influenced the Magyar peasant mind, peopled their folklore with images of national heroes, and determined the orientation of the Hungarians toward their neighbors.

The ancestors of the Magyars lived before the ninth century A.D. 175 in what is today the southern part of European Russia. They were tied by a loose tribal organization in which Bulgar-Turkic and Ugrian-Magyar elements banded together. They followed the nomadic, equestrian way of life of the Bulgar-Turks and adopted the language of the Ugrian-Magyar minority.

In 896, they settled in the Carpathian basin after having easily overcome the resistance of the latter's scattered Slavic, Bulgar and Avar inhabitants. Settling in the Danube valley, they occupied an ill-fated crossroad where Oriental expansion toward the heart of Europe and Germanic expansion toward the Balkans and the Near East have clashed for ages. In this new habitation, the Magyars continued their nomadic way of life for almost a century and conducted plundering expeditions as far into civilized Europe as Bremen, the Pyrenees, Southern Italy and Byzantium.

000 civilized Europe as Bremen, the Pyrenees, Southern Italy and Byzantium. 6

173 Legendary references to this period abound among the Magyars. According to folk tales and chronicles, two sons of the giant Menrot, Hunor and Magor, moved to a new hunting ground in the swamps of Meotis, guided in their wanderings by a wondrous roe (csodaszarvas). Arriving at Meotis, they abducted the women of the family of King Dula, the Alan ruler. The offspring of Magor and Hunor became known, respectively, as Magyars and as Huns--a relationship which Hungarians have always been proud of. The leader of the tribal alliance of the Magyars at the time of the settlement (honfoglalás) was Árpád, founder of the House known by his name. He, in turn, is said to have descended from a huge eagle-like bird, the turul--just one example of the shamanistic totemism of the Magyar ancestors. Árpád himself is referred to by the Hungarians today as the founding father of the country, Árpád apánk, 'our father Árpád.'

175 797 At the turn of the millennium, chief Géza's son, István, educated in Christian beliefs, became the first king of the country. He was crowned in 1001 with a crown he had received from Pope Sylvester II. This "Holy Crown" is still considered the symbol of Magyar sovereignty. The complete conversion of the Magyars took several decades, but the open resistance of certain pagan clan chiefs was energetically suppressed by

István himself, who was later canonized. Szent István was never a subject in popular narrations, but one of his successors, Szent László (1077-1095), is depicted in several widely known legends as the prototype of Christian knighthood.

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Under the reign of the House of Árpád, the Magyars were converted to Christianity and thus were subject to numerous important western influences, especially from missionaries, French, German and Slavic. Since then, the basic sources of Magyar civilization have been (a) its Oriental heritage, (b) the western influences as transmitted by the leading classes, and (c) elements borrowed either from the pre-Hungarian occupants of the Carpathian basin or from the neighboring, chiefly Slavic, peoples.

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Under the Árpáds the feudal system had not yet taken root; the king governed as a patriarch over a society in which servitude was not unknown, and in which his own power was based upon the huge domains which he possessed.

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Being right on the boundaries of their spheres of influence, the Árpáds waged several wars against the Holy Roman Empire and Byzantium.

In 1241, the Tatars broke through the Carpathian mountains, defeated the Magyars and pillaged their country. The cruelty of the Tatars (Tatárdúlás) is still remembered and their name still recalls to the

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175 Hungarians ruthless military campaigning and barbarian devastation.

Under the Angevin kings and Zsigmond (also a Holy Roman Emperor), in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the feudal system was definitely implanted in Hungary, to stay until the nineteenth century. At the bottom of the social pyramid were the serfs (jobbágy), who constituted a majority of the nation with little or no rights, and who were the direct ancestors of the Magyar peasants of our day. The country's recovery from the Mongolian devastation was partly due to the exploitation of gold which made Hungary contemporary Europe's largest producer of precious metals. Urbanization appeared, though of course only in its medieval form. The increasing wealth of local overlords led, later on, to the weakening of the royal power as well as to an increased exploitation of the lower classes.

After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Turkish threat was imminent in Hungary. Hunyadi János, the Vojvoda of Transylvania who became, upon the death of King Uládzló I, the regent of the country, successfully stopped the Sultan's troops at Belgrade in 1456. Hunyadi's deeds against the Turks made him a legendary hero of terrible strength.

Hunyadi's son, Mátyás, elected king in 1458, brought the Hungarian Renaissance to its peak. His court competed in splendor with those of the Italian princes. He reorganized the army, but used it more against Hapsburg

imperialism than against the Turks, and his financial and judiciary reforms remedied the troubled conditions prevailing in the country. An elected king, he drew heavily on the support of the lower nobility. History has designated him "Matthias the Just" (Mátyás az igazságos) and still remembers him as a defender of the poor and a dispenser of justice.

But under the successors of Mátyás, economic conditions grew steadily worse. Hungarian gold had depreciated in the competition with gold imported from the New World, the central political power of the country was weakened, and the local oligarchs were exploiting the serfs with increasing rapaciousness. The first massive armed uprising of Magyar peasants--albeit an unsuccessful one--dates from 1514. This was a poorly armed and untrained army of the people, whose captured leader, György Dózsa, was savagely tortured and slowly burned alive, his flesh served to his lieutenants. After the execution of scores of rebellious peasants, legal sanctions provided for the "eternal servitude" of the peasant who, from then on, was not only more heavily taxed but was also deprived of his right to change masters and to move from one domain to another. (This historical incident is now being strongly played up in the Communist propaganda directed toward the peasants. Dózsa had previously never had a prominent place in Hungarian folklore.) [208]

The completely disorganized country was an easy prey of a new and

175 successful Turkish onslaught. The battlefield of Mohács, scene of the Magyars' defeat (1526), still survives in such locations as több is veszett Mohácsnál, 'the Mohács loss was greater,' a common expression of sympathy. To the Magyar mind, Mohács symbolizes a paralyzing, near-total defeat.

With Mohács began the 150-year Turkish occupation which resulted in a threefold division of the country, the central and southern sections of which were occupied by Turkish military forces and treated as an absolute colonial dependency; furthermore, the population was suppressed by the corrupt administration by local pashas, heavy taxation, forced labor, even robbery, extortion, murder and enslavement. With most of the inhabitants having fled into the other zones, this area became practically depopulated, while the total number of the inhabitants of the entire country sank from the pre-Mohács 3 to 4 million level down to little more than one million.

The western and northwestern parts of Hungary were ruled by the Catholic Hapsburgs, while Protestant Transylvania and northeastern Hungary was a relatively autonomous principality, vassal of the Porte. Thus Hungary proper had two kings, one Hapsburg-German and one "national."

A controversy whose roots lay in medieval East European politics--the hostility of the Magyars toward the Germanizing imperialistic trend of

the Hapsburgs--manifested itself, after Mohács, as a continuous struggle. 175
Between 1683 and 1697, the troops of Leopold I cleared the land of the
Turks. They evicted some of the remaining Magyar "rebels" or pro-Turk
"quislings," and settled masses of Germans, Slovaks and Wallachians in the
deserted areas. Against the Magyars, the imperial troops were altogether
as ruthless as the Turkish Janizaries. And, of course, during all these
chaotic years of alternating "liberations," the peasants were the ones
who had to suffer the most.

After years of mistreatment under foreign rule, the Magyars
reacted with the first Hungarian war of independence (1705-11). In this
controversy the majority of the Magyars sided with Ferenc Rákóczy, prince
of Transylvania and leader of the movement. The national army of the
kuruc (as opposed to a few pro-Hapsburg Hungarian labanc) fought in a
few skirmishes with practically no equipment and no international backing,
and their light cavalry, victorious in guerrilla warfare, won no major
battle. Their fight was rather a symbolic one. In the popular mind,
Rákóczy's name and the word kuruc still stand for bravery and devotion to
a national cause, while labanc bears the connotation of a German or
foreign mercenary.

After Rákóczy's defeat, the Hapsburgs definitely seated themselves

175 on the Hungarian throne. During the eighteenth century, relations between the Magyar Estates and the Court of Vienna became more normalized, but in the country the feudal social structure continued undisturbed. The more liberal Hapsburg kings who undertook an alleviation of the serfs' lot encountered stubborn opposition on the part of the nobility.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, nationalism began to awaken in Hungary as it did in the rest of Europe. This new attitude severed the Magyars FROM and the minorities which, after the repulsion of the Turks, had been settled en masse in the country. Meanwhile, the social reforms inspired by the French Revolution grew more and more pressing. At first, the reform ideas found a deaf ear among the rulers of Hungary: the high nobility had switched to the Viennese court life and had become staunchly conservative, and the lower nobility was just as hostile to any infringement upon their privileges and prerogatives. Only a fraction of the noblemen were imbibed with any radical ideas. But still, this minority, sure of an overwhelming popular support, easily rode the 1848 wave of European revolutions. The leader of these social reformers was Lajos Kossuth, and under his leadership their demands were formulated in the famous 12 points of the Ides of March (1848). Kossuth's followers brought about the recognition of basic human rights; they insured individual freedom and equality before

the law; they abolished the tax-exemption of the nobility and set up a government responsible to the Parliament. 175

The original conciliatory attitude of the Court soon became one of strong opposition and war broke out in which the young Hungarian government faced not only the Hapsburg power but the Holy Alliance also. After initial victories, Russian intervention followed and the "War for Freedom" (Szabadságharc) was lost. The people fought heroically under Kossuth and after the defeat, his name (Kossuth apánk 'our father Kossuth') remained engraved in their memory as a symbol of national independence as well as of democratic social reform. After the defeat, Kossuth went into exile; he was welcomed in several western capitals, but he was unable to raise any material support for his cause. In 1852, after an enthusiastic reception on Capitol Hill, he toured the United States.

Meanwhile, reaction raged in Hungary in the form of a revengeful bureaucratic oppression, Germanization, and economic exploitation of the rebel country under the aegis of the Minister of Interior Bach.

Consolidation and appeasement came in the 1860's. At peace then, Hungary prospered under an economically liberal government. The standard of living, however, increased more for the higher and middle classes than for labor and the peasantry. A wave of strikes among agricultural laborers

175 and work stoppages in the just-developing industries began to take place.
[167] Tens of thousands of landless peasants were driven by poverty to the United States and Canada. 1

The First World War found Hungary on the side of the Central Powers. With them, the country tumbled down to defeat and social decomposition. In 1918, a secession from Austria was proclaimed and a democratic government took over which, however, was incapable of carrying the burden of reorganization. The reins of government slipped into the hands of the Communists who proclaimed a dictatorship over the proletariat. In 1919, the atrocities of the revolutionaries and especially their terroristic methods of collecting grain in a starving country, turned the peasants away from the Bolsheviks and prepared the way for the successful nationalistic counter-revolution under the leadership of Miklós Horthy.

The new national assembly, while retaining the royalist fundamentals set up in the Hungarian constitution, declared that the throne would temporarily remain unfilled and named Horthy third Regent of Hungary after Hunyadi and Kossuth.

The new course, after some initial excesses, soon established itself as a "mild" dictatorship with some parliamentary assistance--a regime similar to Salazar's Portugal. The Horthy regime's first bitter pill was the

1 [in the 1860's - Analyst]

The Horthy regime's first bitter pill was the Versailles-Trianon Peace Treaty which mutilated Hungary: 71 per cent of her pre-war territories and 63 per cent of her inhabitants were given to the new neighbors: Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

This Treaty, so contrary to the Wilsonian ideals, kept burning the flame of irredenta among the Magyars without distinction of class. The national grievances resulting from the Treaty of Trianon were one of the most important reasons why certain anti-western and pro-German propaganda found ready response among a large number of the people.

In 1920, 54.2 per cent of the land belonged to big landowners in estates over 100 hold, i.e. 142 acres. In order to solve this urgent problem of the rural population, an agrarian reform of limited scope was initiated to remedy the historic injustice. However, only 26 per cent of the large estates were concerned; 404,000 peasants received only a little over four acres each. The reform, with its weak aims and the paternal enforcement methods which it employed, failed to impress the peasantry.

With a vivid picture of Communist terror in their memory, and suffering from an ever-increasing pressure from the expanding Reich, the Hungarians drifted closer and closer to the Axis side. Then came their participation in World War II on the side of the Germans, defeat, and the final occupation of the country by the Red Army in 1945.

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Among a great number of other democratic provisions, the new government immediately ordered a complete agrarian reform. An additional 550,000 persons were given land averaging seven acres. In spite of this large-scale handout of property, ascribed propaganda-wise to the Communist Party and the "Red Army of Liberation," the first free elections in 1945 returned a vast majority of anti-Communist deputies to the new national assembly.

[474] The peasants' mistrust of the Communists turned definitely into opposition when the forced collectivization of the previously distributed land began after the Communists' take-over in late 1947. Since then, the fundamental opposition of the peasants to the Communist state has not changed in the slightest; there seem to be periods of détente between government and peasantry, but these may be simply the result of the Communist tactic of exerting pressure on the screw of collectivization with alternating force.

000 The history of Hungary in the twentieth century has left no name which has had a lasting impact on the mind of the common people.

2: Pálóczy-Horváth EC1 Hungary EC1
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[For an account of the social history of Hungary from the ninth to the twentieth century, see category 116, pp. 36-97]

2:Paloczy-Horvath H-3 (no date)1944 EC1 Hungary EC1

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ian history in laying bare the roots of the catastrophe which overtook the country in 1918, and which, in almost identical form, has overwhelmed her again. Freeing history of its romantic trappings, the author reveals the real cause of these tragic events in the German orientation of Hungary's foreign policy and in the semi-feudal structure of her society. These two factors were, indeed, indissolubly linked. For without the help of the Germans it would have been impossible for Hungary's lords to maintain their anachronistic rule in modern times. No deeper insight into the natural history of the Hungarian oligarchy is possible.

The German connection is, of course, almost as old as Hungary herself. Ever since St. Stephen's time she has sought and found in the German world a welcome addition, if not a counter-weight, to the masses of her partly Slavonic subjects. This fact, as well as the frequent settlement of Germans in Hungary, served, in our epoch, as the stepping-stones of German power policy in that country.

After 1526, the contact became closer with the appearance of the Habsburgs on the Hungarian political scene. The otherwise risky method of marriage paid the Habsburgs well. However, for another 150 years the Turks disputed the new acquisition by occupying the greater part of Hungary, and making Transylvania tributary to themselves.

Hungary was now engaged in a fight on two fronts, against the Turks and the Habsburgs. Such a situation lent itself to much contradictory adulation on the part of later historians. While Hungary's struggle against the Turks was presented as a crusade in defence of Christian civilisation, her intermittent fights against the Habsburgs were similarly idealised, although they happened to be fought in military alliance with the self-same Turks, against whom at other times the alleged crusade was being waged. Dr. Goebbels was not the only propagandist who trod on his own toes.

Actually, victories over the Habsburgs were victories for feudalism. Three times Hungary made a solemn compact with the Habsburg dynasty, and on each occasion the big landowners gained some special privilege in exchange for the concessions made to the throne. In 1687, the Crown of St, Stephen was declared to be hereditary in the male line of the Habsburgs; the same Diet did not fail to enact the privilege of *fidei commissa* in favour of the Magyar peers of the realm. In 1723, the succession was extended to the female line; simultaneously, the right of entail was extended to the rest of the aristocracy. After 1867, when the famous "Compromise" drew the bonds between Hun-

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●175 gary and Austria even closer, an Order in Council made the laws
566 on *fidei commissa* more effective. The Magyar oligarchy made nationalism pay. They never regarded Hungary as safe, unless they could feel sure of their dominion over the peasants. This was evident during the rule of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, whose enlightened absolutism was particularly against their interests.

The failure of the Josephinean experiment in Hungary is pregnant with significance. Joseph II introduced reforms as radical as those subsequently proposed and carried into effect by the Assemblies of the French Revolution. Serfdom was abolished and many aristocratic prerogatives were annulled once and for all. These daring innovations mark him out as one of the outstanding benefactors of mankind. He might have been wholly successful, but for the fact that his centralised method of administration involved the official use of *one* single language in his multilingual Empire. And the Emperor, though averse to nationalism in all its forms, for purely practical reasons chose German as the new *lingua franca* of the reformed Empire. This psychological blunder was to prove fatal to his plans. The common people of Hungary, who knew no Latin and cherished their native tongue, resented what they took to be the Emperor's attempt at deliberate Germanisation. Their genuinely patriotic sentiments were cleverly echoed by the nobility, who appeared to embrace the cause of the people while actually launching against the crowned reformer a political campaign in defence of their prerogatives. They were but little concerned with the Magyar tongue, which many of them did not even understand. The reactionary campaign was successful, and the Emperor on his death-bed had to withdraw the reforms.

In the fateful year 1848 the Hungarian aristocracy was split into two camps, the pro-Habsburgs and the Liberals. The Liberal aristocrats rallied behind the enlightened conservatism of Széchenyi and, eventually, even behind the radical Kossuth when they realised that the appeal of Liberal principles was too strong to be disregarded. They hoped, however, to act as a brake on the demagogic drive of Kossuth. To a certain extent they were successful in this. On the home front, so far as his attitude towards the nationalities was concerned, Kossuth's liberalism was of course strictly limited. This, ultimately, caused the downfall of the
000 revolution. Our author, in his description of Kossuth's rôle in the 1848 revolution, seems to disregard the fact that Kossuth, in 1848, roundly refused the offer of collaboration extended to him by the representatives of the various nationalities. It was only at the eleventh hour, when the failure of the revolution appeared unavoidable, that he changed his attitude. For the rest of his life,

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it is true, he remained an advocate of a Danubian Confederation — an idea of great promise, as we shall see. Mr. Pálóczy maintains that it was the influence of the Hungarian gentry and aristocrats that prevented the co-operation between the Magyars and the Slovaks, Rumanians and Croats. It would be idle to deny that such influences may have affected Kossuth, but, on the other hand, he was in full possession of power and there is ample evidence of his non-co-operative attitude.

The turning point of Hungarian history was 1867. Francis Joseph was obliged, after the defeat of 1866 at the hands of Prussia, to come to an understanding with Hungary. This understanding became known as the "Compromise". It was not an understanding between the Hungarian and Austrian peoples, but between the Hungarian nobility and the Emperor Francis Joseph. It implied the domination of all the nationalities of the Empire by the small minority of German-Austrians in Austria and of the Magyars in Hungary. In other words, it aimed at the rule of a minority and thus was essentially anti-democratic. Eventually, the national aspirations of the various nationalities within the Dual-Monarchy became the embodiment of democratic opposition. Since oppression, whether national or social, is always anti-democratic, the nationality question and the social questions inevitably remained closely connected. This fatal interdependence led to the blind alley which made the disruption of the Dual Monarchy inevitable. For the only possible way out would have been the self-transformation of the Dual-Monarchy into a federation of all its nationalities. But in this case the preponderance of the Slav element, by virtue of its numerical superiority, would have been unavoidable. This very possibility induced the Hungarian nobility, as well as the Germans in Berlin, to do their utmost to prevent federalism. The former would have lost their commanding position within an archaic social structure, and the latter a bridgehead in their "Drang nach Osten". By means of this so-called "Compromise" German diplomacy secured another safety-valve against any federalistic possibility in the form of the Triple Alliance. This alliance—which, in fact, was really a dual alliance between Berlin and Vienna, with Italy playing only a secondary rôle—soon degenerated into an alliance between the Berlin imperialists and the nobility in Budapest. Their interests remained identical right up to the outbreak of the First World War, and this should explain why Hungary was so faithful an ally of Germany between 1914 and 1918. Nothing could be more illustrative of the static character of Hungarian social politics between the two World Wars than the fact that

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●175 almost the same motives induced Hungary to be a similarly faith-
566 ful ally of Nazi Germany in the present war.

The analogy is indeed striking. Three times within three-quarters of a century Hungarian feudalism has linked its fate with Germany. First, in 1867, when Prussia's victory over Austria enabled the Hungarian aristocracy to force a favourable compromise on the Emperor. This compromise served the double purpose of saving their prerogatives from encroachment by a dynasty which was threatening to become an ally of the villeins against their masters. and, at the same time, of ensuring their hegemony over the non-Magyar races of Hungary. It was at the bidding of the Magyar leaders of the Dual-Monarchy that the Alliance of Vienna with Berlin was engineered by Andrássy. Secondly, in 1914, when the achievement of 1867 was put to the test of history. For half a century the Magyar lords had maintained their rule over the Magyar people intact by refusing them democratic rights under the pretence that if they had such rights it would endanger "the Magyar character of the country". Such a rule of oppression could not fail to antagonise the non-Magyar peoples inside and outside the country. The bullets of Sarajevo were directed against a system the seat of which was in Budapest, and which naturally looked for protection to Berlin once it realised that the war was inevitable. The self-same Count Tisza who vainly attempted to decline responsibility for the declaration of war, became the *jusqu'au boutiste* of Berlin imperialism in his endeavour to maintain the social and national domination of his class. After the defeat of 1918, as we shall see, the forces of democracy were soon thrust aside and saddled with the responsibility for the consequences of a lost war, which had been the logical outcome of the policies of reactionary feudalists. Nevertheless these self-same classes assumed power and embarked on policies which inevitably led to a new war on Germany's side. For what else was *revisionism* but the continuation of an old policy under changed conditions? Hungary's lords now wished to regain the estates which they had not succeeded in holding, and wanted to re-establish the dominance over the non-Magyar
175 races which they had failed to maintain. While pretending to strive merely for a correction of the boundary line, they were actually engaged in an agitation to recover their lost frontiers. More than ever they had to seek the alliance of an imperialist Power which was hostile to the Slav peoples and which approved of their reactionary social regime. Nazi Germany thus offered as the ideal partner in the traditional scheme. Even before Hungary actually entered the war on the side of Berlin, revision-

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ism had scored in the Vienna Awards what seemed to be considerable successes. However, they only made her participation in the war even more inevitable, since Hungary had now to fight to retain what only German help and complete subservience to Hitler could secure for her. 1941 was the necessary sequel to 1914, and, indeed, to 1867.

In the First World War, as we have seen, the Hungarian diehards were more faithful allies of Berlin than the Austrians, or even the Emperor himself, who, as is well known, went even so far as to make overtures for a separate peace to the Entente. After the collapse, we attempted to democratise Hungary. In particular we endeavoured to find a solution to *the land question as the foundation of any new social policy*. With the hopelessly out-of-date social structure which we inherited, it was almost impossible to solve these explosive problems as quickly and efficiently as the bitter impatience of the people would have required. Moreover, the loss of territories and the shock of the armistice emphasised the need for social compensation of the masses. Besides, the attitude of the Great Powers, by showing undue favour towards the active representatives of the *ancien régime*, and by accepting the cheap propaganda which represented us as the forerunners of Bolshevism, made our task, if that was at all possible, even more difficult. Viewing the events of those days in perspective, it is clear that we were only the first on the long list of European countries where reaction was helped back to its previous position of privilege by political forces outside their frontiers.

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The responsibility for the present situation lies partly with the Western Great Powers themselves. A brief survey of the fate which the Hungarian democratic Republic suffered at their hands will show this clearly.

In 1918, defeated Hungary was again faced with no less an issue than that of a change-over from her thousand-year Teutonic orientation to a final linking of her fate with the Slavonic peoples. As we saw, this decision affected the whole social system of the country, the replacing of a hereditary oligarchy by popular government and social democracy. Personally I had taken my stand as early as 1917 on the principles enunciated by President Wilson which involved a federative solution of the nationalities problem, together with the liquidation of oligarchy. This could have opened the road to a real understanding with the Slavs, as well as with the Rumanians. However, it was too late. The Wilsonian principles were never put into practice, some plebiscites were never held. Far-sighted statesmen amongst our neighbours

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THE MOUNTAIN-GIRDED PLAIN. The country in which they settled is a wide plain formed by the middle course of the Danube. The plain, with the inner slopes of the mountains which surround it, forms an area over 100,000 square miles in extent, and roughly circular in shape. In the west the open country is bounded by the Austrian Alps; in the south, by the mountains of Bosnia and Serbia; while the north and east are enclosed by the vast sweep of the Carpathians. Of these ranges, those of Austria and the Balkans are comparatively low and open—more 'mountain systems' than continuous ranges—and are able to support fairly large populations. These peoples—the Germans of Austria and the Slavs of the Balkans—were able to resist the invaders. Thus on these two sides the frontiers of 'Hungary', when they became established, did not extend beyond the foothills of the mountains. The main crest of the Carpathians, on the other hand, forms a wall broken by only a few passes. It is thus difficult to cross the mountains from north and east, while easy to approach them up the many valleys, nearly all of which converge on the central plain. Thus the Magyar invaders found it easy to conquer the sparse population of these highlands, and up to 1918 the frontiers of Hungary in the north and east ran along the central watershed of the Carpathians. Hungary thus included not only what, since 1918, has been the eastern half of Czechoslovakia (Slovakia and Ruthenia) but also in the east the much-disputed province of Transylvania, which after 1918 became Rumanian.

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175 **THE AGE OF CONSOLIDATION.** Hungarian history since the 'Conquest' falls into two sharply distinct periods, divided by the central date of 1526. The first period was one of consolidation and progress. At first the new arrivals had to fight hard for their existence and independence against the Germans, who organized against them the 'Eastern March' of Austria, the old name of which Hitler revived in 1938. They survived this struggle, however, and in A.D. 1000 became one of the European family of nations, when their great king, St Stephen, great-grandson of the original 'leader' Árpád, who had brought them into Hungary, adopted Latin Christianity for himself and his nation, receiving from Pope Sylvester II the famous Holy Crown of Hungary. St Stephen's descendants and successors, the Hungarian kings of the eleventh and succeeding centuries, gradually made good their position. The nation multiplied, losing as it did so (partly through inter-breeding with neighbouring peoples) some of its wild, nomadic characteristics. The Magyars ceased to live in tents and built towns, churches and monasteries. From their primitive life of nomadic stock-breeders they became settled agriculturalists. At the same time, the old social organization dissolved, gradually giving place to a new order which in many respects resembled that of all the European nations of the day, the English included. Round the king grew up an aristocracy of great nobles; at the other end of the scale, the peasants sank into bondage. The chief difference as compared with England was that the class of 'small nobles' or freemen were usually more successful in asserting their rights against the great

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oligarchs, so that the privileged class was larger. 175
In consequence the class below them, the peasants, had a heavier burden to bear. Nevertheless, the nation flourished. During these centuries it ranked as a Great Power, preserving its independence against the German princes and intervening in Balkan affairs. The days of its great kings, Louis the Great (who also wore the Crown of Poland) and Matthias Corvinus, are remembered as the golden age of Hungarian history.

All this time, however, Hungary had to face a constant threat from invaders, pressing down from the east, along the same road taken centuries earlier by the Magyars themselves. The Tatars or Mongols devastated the country in the thirteenth century, wiping out a large part of its population. After them came the Osmanli or Ottoman Turks, who gradually conquered Asia Minor, Constantinople and the Balkan States. Against them the kings of Hungary waged almost constant defensive warfare from the fourteenth century onward, a struggle in which Hungary won the title of Shield and Bulwark of Christendom.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE TURKISH CONQUEST. This long blood-letting exhausted the Magyars and in 1526, at the famous battle of Mohács, in South Hungary, the Hungarian army was annihilated and its king perished. The victorious Turks now advanced and occupied all Central Hungary. For 150 years a Turkish Pasha ruled in Buda. In Transylvania native princes preserved a half-independence, while acknowledging the Sultan as their suzerain.

When this happened, the old native Árpád

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175 dynasty had already died out in the male line 200 years previously. When King Louis II perished at Mohács, the Archduke Ferdinand Habsburg of Austria claimed the succession to the throne both of Hungary and Bohemia, of which Louis had also been king. Although the part of Hungary over which the Habsburgs could rule was only a strip of its northern and western edge, the acquisition of it, with that of Bohemia, enabled them to build up their dominions into the greatest of the Continental Powers.

For almost exactly 400 years Hungary remained part of the Habsburg Monarchy. At the end of the seventeenth century, the old frontiers were recovered, the Turks being driven out and Transylvania reincorporated soon after. But the new Hungary was only a shadow of the old. The Turkish rule had afflicted half the country with a desolation the effects of which are still visible today. Moreover the Magyar population of the central plains, which had been directly under the Turks, had been largely wiped out; whereas the Turks had done no more than raid the Slovaks and Ruthenes of the north, the Germans of the western fringe, and Transylvania, with its mixed population in which Rumanians formed a large element. The numbers of non-Magyars in Hungary were further increased, after the expulsion of the Turks, by immigration from the south of Serb and Croat fugitives from Moslem rule, and by the colonization of the unoccupied land. For this purpose settlers were brought in from all over Europe; but most of them were Germans, coming from South Germany and called by the people—as their descen-

9: Eppstein S-4 (no date) 1945 EC1 Hungary EC1

dants still are—'Swabians'. Thus by the eighteenth century the Magyars were in a minority in Hungary, and formed the largest element only in the central plains: the surrounding parts of the kingdom were inhabited in majority by other peoples, Germans, Slovaks, Ruthenes, Rumanians, Serbs. In the south-west, the population of Croatia, which was not an integral part of Hungary, although the king of Hungary had since 1102 worn the Crown of Croatia, had moved northward, since the Turks retained their hold of the mountainous south. The new Croatia now reached up to its present frontier, the Drave river.

THE RULE OF THE HABSBURGS. Though the Habsburgs had to leave Hungary most of the forms of its constitution, at heart they regarded it as a rebellious and unsatisfactory province. Their real aim was to weld all their dominions into a single, centralized, unified monarchy, over which they were to rule absolutely. These efforts led to many rebellions by Hungarians; the leaders of these, Bocskay, Rákóczi (after whom the famous Rákóczi March is named) and others, are still the national heroes of Hungary. The last great conflict, in 1848–9, was led by Louis Kossuth. The Austrian Emperor, Franz Josef, only put the rising down with great difficulty and had to call on Russian help to do so. Thirteen of its leaders were shot at Arad. They are remembered as the martyrs of Arad', and the anniversary of their execution is kept as a day of national mourning. Kossuth's name is still the most famous in Hungary as symbolizing her eternal struggle for liberty and

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• 175 independence. It is also revered by the peasants, since it was through his efforts that they received their liberty in 1848, when the relics of the medieval serfdom were abolished.

Actually, the result of the 1848–9 conflict was more of a compromise than appeared at first. The emperor was unable to make his despotism permanent and, in 1867, had to make his peace with the Hungarian leaders. The Habsburg dominions were reorganized as 'Austria-Hungary', and in them, under the new 'Dualist' form of state, Hungary had full freedom in her internal affairs and an equal voice with Austria in matters of common interest to both (chiefly foreign policy and defence).

DISRUPTION OF THE DUAL MONARCHY. This arrangement lasted almost exactly 50 years, but it broke down at the end of that period, chiefly because of its failure to give satisfaction to the aspirations of the 'nationalities' in both Austria and Hungary: that is, to the peoples other than the Germans in Austria or the Magyars in Hungary. So far as Hungary was concerned, although half the population was now non-Magyar, the whole form and spirit of the state was rigidly Magyar. The other peoples were, as inferiors, treated with much galling contempt and intolerance, and abused as traitors if they resented this treatment. The only result was, of course, to make them really discontented and very soon many of them were regarding Hungary as a prison and waiting their chance to join their brothers in the new national states which were growing, or which the future promised out-

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side the frontiers of the Hungarian kingdom, namely, Serbia, Rumania or the Czecho-Slovak State, for which the Czechs were working in Austria. To this were added social discontents at conditions which, in some respects, were being modernized too quickly while in others they remained medieval. The end of the ancient Hungarian kingdom, in its old form, came after Austria-Hungary had fought the losing war of 1914–18. The national minorities received their freedom and set up their own states. Under the Treaty of the Trianon (1920), Hungary was reduced to the central core of the old kingdom. Of this the inhabitants were almost entirely Magyar. In area it was less than 30 % of the former territory, and included rather less than 35 % of what had been the kingdom's population. The remainder of the country was partitioned among the neighbouring states.

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Frontier changes, 1919–1941

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portant for their flocks and herds, divided it as follows. There was the 'Dunántúl', or 'country beyond the Danube', i.e. the part lying within the bend of the Danube, or West Hungary; the Észák, or north, more commonly known as the Felvidék or Upper District; the Alföld, or plain, between the Danube and the Tisza; the Tiszántúl, or 'country beyond the Tisza'—the plain east of the Tisza; the 'right bank of the Tisza', in the north-east of Hungary; Transylvania, and the 'corner between the Tisza and Maros', afterwards known as the Bánát. Later events gave to the triangle enclosed between the lower reaches of the Tisza and the Danube the name of Bácska, and more recently still the extreme north-east corner of Hungary—the Podkarpatska Rus, or Carpatho-Ruthenia of Czechoslovakia, received the name of Kárpátálja (the country at the foot of the Carpathians).

Of these, the Treaty of Trianon left Hungary with only the Dunántúl (slightly diminished), a small part of Észák, the northern and central Alföld, without the Bácska, and part of the Tiszántúl. For geographical purposes, there is no noticeable distinction between the two last named; and Trianon Hungary falls naturally into two main divisions: Western and Northern Hungary (the Dunántúl and the Észák) and the Great Plain (the Alföld and the Tiszántúl).

THE TWO HALVES OF TRIANON HUNGARY. This division is more than geographical; that is, the dividing line of the Danube has in the past given the two halves of Hungary separate histories, which have resulted in social, political and spiritual

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differences. The west was for some centuries a Roman province (as was Transylvania, for a rather shorter period), while Central Hungary was still the camping-ground of wild nomads, such as Attila's Huns. The west has always been more exposed to Western, and particularly to Austrian, influence and infiltration. Above all, a considerable part of the west escaped the Turkish conquest, remaining under the comparative shelter of the Austrian armies. One result of this was that, while nearly all Hungary accepted the Protestant Faith (chiefly in its Calvinist form) in the sixteenth century, the west and north were reconverted to Roman Catholicism under the Counter-Reformation. The feudal institutions imported from Austria struck deep roots only in the west, which became the home of vast estates owned by princely families. When the east was resettled in the eighteenth century, huge estates were founded there also, but there was more mobility and less permanence. In politics, the west is more 'legitimist', i.e. more attached to the Habsburgs, while the east is more 'nationalist'. This difference is expressed in the Magyar words 'labanc' and 'kuruc', of which the former is derived from an old term meaning an Austrian soldier, while the latter is a corruption of the word 'crusader'. The Calvinist of the Alföld regards himself as the true Magyar and despises the man of the Dunántúl as 'half a Swabian'. The west, returning the compliment, points out that only among its own hills and valleys has there been any degree of continuity of population. The inhabitants of the plains, it says, are some of them Turks, the last immigrants. It is true that while

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in most of the west (the fringe assigned to Austria in 1920 excepted), the Magyars have been able to absorb the foreign influences which penetrated there, the plain has not yet had time to digest the enormous numbers of immigrants which poured into it from 1700 onward. The centre of it is, it is true, purely Magyar to-day, and it is here that the most characteristic forms of Hungarian national life are found. But in the south and east of it the Magyars never recovered the ground which they lost under the Turks, and in fact these areas were split off from Hungary in 1920 on the strength of their non-Magyar majority. Most of the north was, of course, detached for the same reason; here the Slovak and Ruthene peoples had had a continuous existence from early times, and the Magyars had never penetrated in large numbers, although the landowners and the officials had been Magyars, or had adopted the Magyar language and ways.

WESTERN HUNGARY. The Dunántúl is not only sheltered by the Danube from the east, its whole geographical position is less open than that of the Alföld. It is a plain, by comparison with the Alps or the Carpathians, and most of it is low-lying; but it is traversed by several ranges of considerable height, the most important of which, beginning in a series of curious isolated hills of volcanic origin north of Lake Balaton, runs in more continuity through the regions known as the Bakony Forest and the Vertes hills, and reaches the Danube above Buda. The Bakony is the only part of Trianon Hungary which contains any large forests. Up to a century ago it was famous as a haunt of 'betyárs'

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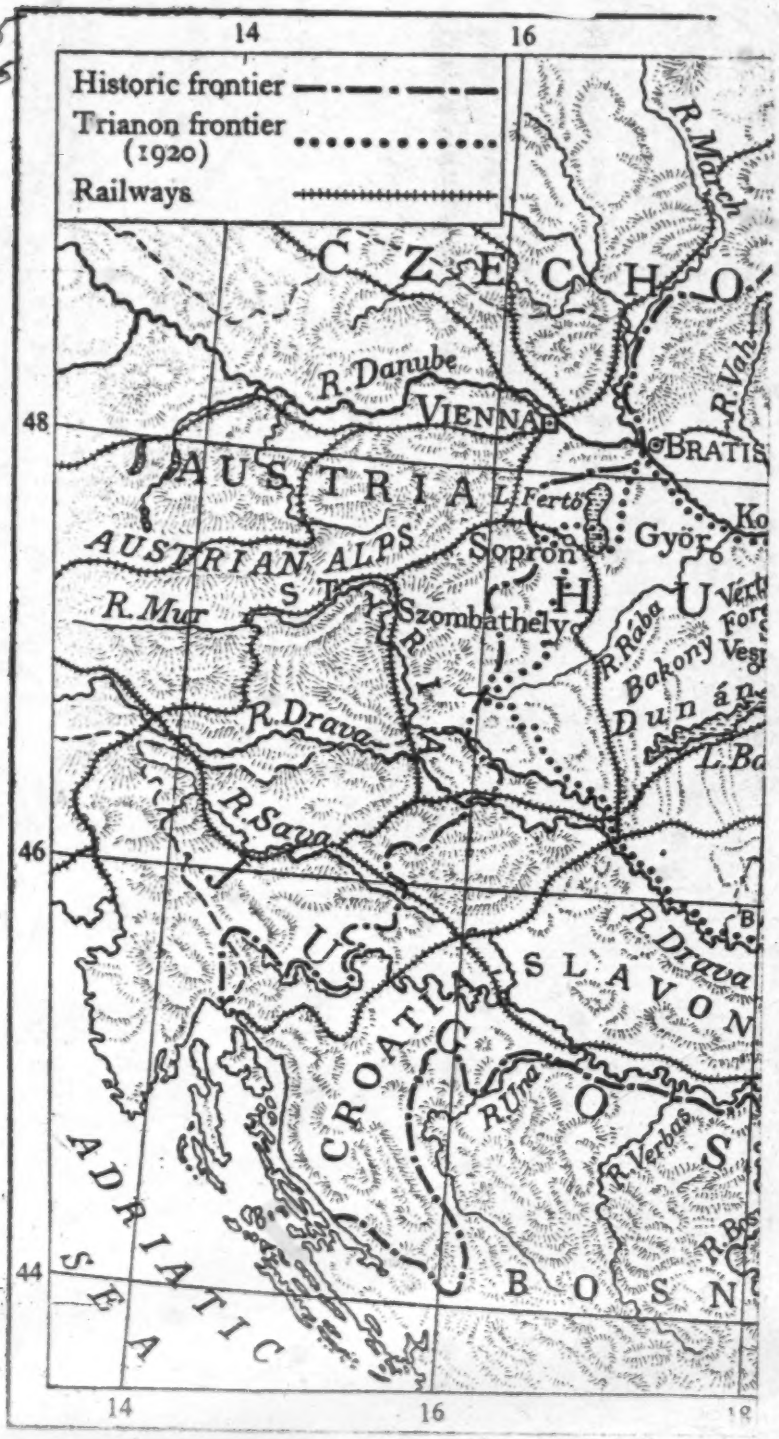

End Map (A)

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End Map (B)

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End Map (1)

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 193› EC1 Hungary EC1

535 In this dance there are no borders,
From nobody take I orders.

The importance of these dance-words is reflected in the popular sentence which maintains that "without the words a dance is not a dance". Truly enough, by the judicious selection and proper ordering of the dance-words, it would be possible to reconstruct the whole Hungarian folk-dance phase by phase, step by step.

The introductory "slow", the "ornamental" development, and the concluding "fast", the men's solos and the role of the partners in the couple-dance, the proud posture and the leading role of the man, the secondary but extremely lovely role of the woman, the Hungarian dance-step, now in its gracefully balanced floating, now in its skipping, tapping, diving, and its romping hops, the play of the arms and hands, the clicking of spurs and heels, the whirling turns, and finally the dance-words — all make the Hungarian folk-dance something as unique, as typical and artistic, and as highly developed as are the two other natural expressions of the Hungarian folk-spirit: the Hungarian tongue and Hungarian music.

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[175] The Hungarians conquered their land in 896 A. D., and for nearly a century they continued raiding a frightened Europe from Spain to the Baltic. In the chronicle of St. Gallen, written by Brother Eckehard in 926, we find the first known record about Hungarian dancing. A raiding party of Hungarians had fallen upon the Abbey of St. Gallen, and to placate them the frightened monks offered them the choice of their treasury or their equally treasured wine-cellars. The raiders chose the second, whereupon "they started a jolly, good merry dance before their leaders", according to the chronicle.

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1

The next mention of Hungarian dancing we find in the 535
minutes of the Synod of Buda held in 1279. This passage directs the pastors to stop the practice of dancing in the church or in the churchyard, a custom which outlived the order and is found in a mitigated form even today in a few Hungarian regions. The next reference is found in [175]
the famous Illuminated Chronicle of Vienna (1348), a valuable source of early Hungarian history. It states that in celebration of the victory of the allied forces of Rudolf of Habsburg and Ladislas IV of Hungary over Ottokar II, King of Bohemia, in 1278, Ladislas proclaimed a national holiday on which nothing else was to be done but dancing...

With the strengthening of Western Christianity and the puritan ideals of the Reformation we find a great many references to dancing, mostly in the form of ecclesiastical admonitions to the people.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, a preacher blames the girls of the age for being much too industrious in the dance. Another of these admonitions refers to the "dance of the Black Army", *i. e.*, the famous army of mercenaries of King Mathias, constituted in the 1450's, which was perhaps the first regular standing army of Europe. In 1526, during the tragic battle of Mohács, which led to the prolonged invasion of Hungary by the Turks, one of the roused Hungarian noblemen blames the loss of the country on the "damned dancing king, who has lost his life in the headlong flight". In 1552 a churchman complains that the youth spent its time dancing in the spinnery "sometimes as late as midnight" (something to surprise the parents of modern girls); another in 1582 calls dancing one of the gravest Hungarian sins, and a hundred years later a preacher terms dancing the chief pest of the age. All through

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
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105 Hungarian Empire had failed to bring about the establishment of a sound Danubian Federalism; instead, a veritable riot of competing national ir' rests had come into being.

669 Other sources of social disorder can be found in the events 175 which followed the close of the First World War. The fall of 727 the monarchy denuded the country of strong leadership. Democratic forces under the direction of intellectuals of integrity rallied to form a government; but many of them may not unfairly be said to have lacked experience in distinguishing between obtainable objectives and ideals beyond reach. Their government quickly succumbed to a bold experiment in Bolshevist tactics which was tried at the same time in Berlin and Bavaria. Under Béla Kun, an erstwhile insurance agent who had been a prisoner in Russia and was now the power behind the Hungarian scene, a program of ruthless repression and enforced socialization was inaugurated. Troops and police raided the opposition, and "revolutionary tribunals" imposed death sentences which, although they reached an acknowledged total of 585, were only a sample of what was to ensue twenty-five years later. However, Kun's endeavors fell short of success—in large measure because occupation troops, primarily French, were present and in control. That fact enabled a counterrevolutionary movement to get under way; and by 1920 its army, commanded by Admiral Nicholas Horthy, had [642] gained the upper hand. The Allies refused to permit the return of a Habsburg to the throne, and so a new government was formed as a Regency. It had to deal almost immediately with excesses by armed bands seeking revenge who, before they were curbed, tried and executed more than 300 persons. They were also virulently anti-Semitic, alleging that a disproportionately large number of Jews had been associated with Kun's regime.

000 As a result of the Regency's efforts to effect a measure of

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665 whomsoever they could. Violent anti-Semites and pro-Nazis, many with criminal records, were, as Hal Lehrman reported at the time, signed on the dotted line. Espionage and denunciation agencies were established. Nevertheless the anti-Communist population stood its ground well, though it was left unsteady by the sudden disappearance of the Regency, frightened by the brute impact of crimes against person and property by Russian soldiers, and cowed by shootings and arrests. It waited to see whether the Western Powers would give any indication that steps to protect Hungarian freedom would be taken.

648 Certainly the nation deserved a far better fate than would
• 175 soon be meted out to it. To be sure, Admiral Horthy, who for years had waited like a cat for the mouse of opportunity to recovery Hungary's "lost territories," had welcomed the opportunity to do business with Hitler on this issue. Thereby he demonstrated anew the folly of Central European nationalism, which gobbled down small successes in the worst style of old-time autocratic dynastic imperialism, only to prepare itself for its own hour on the block. But on the other hand the Hungarian Prime Minister Count Teleki, alone among the European statesmen doomed to stand in Hitler's way, found the perfect symbol of opposition. He fought as long as he could against the alliance with Hitler and entry into the war. Then he took his life in protest. Cardinal Serédi,

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665 from 1940 to 1945; Zoltán Vas, Chairman of the Planning Bureau and one of Rákosi's most intimate associates, who served during the war as a colonel in the Red Army with responsibility for indoctrinating prisoners; Erno Gerõ, Chairman of the People's Economic Council, who had gone to Moscow at the close of the Spanish Civil War; Karoly Kiss, Minister for External Affairs, captured by the Russians, who gave him further training in Party matters; Mihály Farkas, Minister for Defense, who had worked with the Communist underground in Czechoslovakia; and József Révai, Minister for Public Education, secretary to Kun in 1919, who had gone to Moscow prior to the outbreak of war between Stalin and Hitler.

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when he went to pay his respects at the bier of one who in the eyes of the Catholic Church had sinned grievously by committing suicide, provided one of the most dramatic moments in the history of opposition to Nazism. The Hungarian Army did what it was ordered to do. It fought with valor on the Eastern front and suffered heavy losses. We should not fail to respect its bravery and its sacrifices. One of the erroneous assumptions in recent historical writing is that good soldiers should pause on the eve of battle to decide by caucus whether what they are about to do is above reproach from every moral point of view. That is surely the proper business of the government that orders them to take the field.

During the period of Nazi domination, the Catholic Church fought with energy and charity to mitigate the persecution of the Jews. Numerous tributes have been paid to it for that reason. Cardinal Serédi stated the position of the Papacy on this question with eloquent courage. He was followed in office by Joseph, Cardinal Mindszenty, destined to become one whom the world would look upon as a martyr. The Church saved thousands of Jews from deportation to concentration camps, frequently hiding them in the rooms of convents and monasteries or spiriting them across the border, so that a substantial Hungarian Jewish minority survived. The pro-Nazi Party, known as Arrow and Cross, was shunned by every faithful Christian. In like manner the Church had assisted Polish soldiers who had been forced to flee after the defeat of the armies in which they served.*

When in 1944 the defeat of Hitler was foreshadowed by

* I shall not forget the Polish officer to whom, one fall afternoon in 1945, I gave a lift. As we drove from the outskirts of Naples to Rome, past the ruins of Monte Cassino, he told about the cemetery on the battle-scarred heights above the town, in which rest 1,200 soldiers of the Polish brigade who died in the attack. He was doomed not to return to his homeland. Gratefully he recalled the hospitality which had been accorded to him in a Hungarian convent.